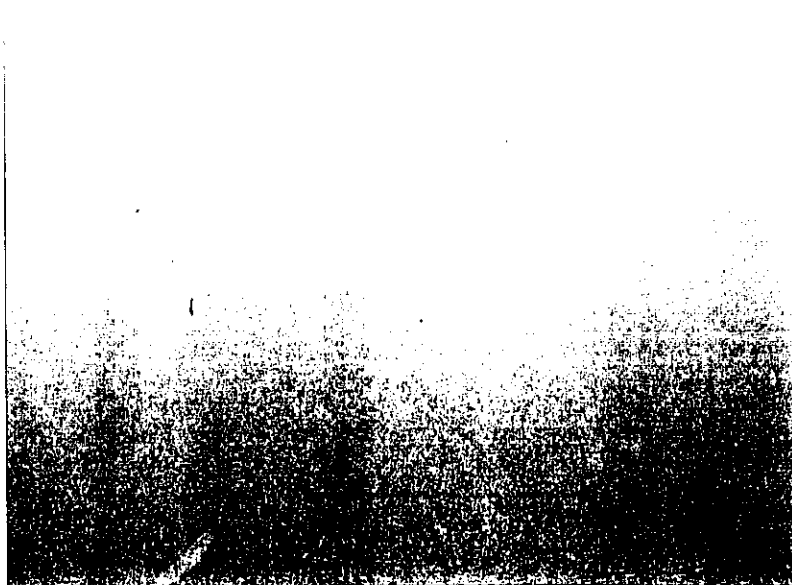




**U.S. 20**

**IN THE  
SHADOW OF  
THE GLACIER**



*A Citizen's  
Guide for  
Public  
Involvement*



Anyone who wants to become involved in the Rt. 20 planning and study process, please call 1-800-837-RT20. Public involvement coordinators for the project will be happy to answer your questions and help you obtain access to the public involvement network.



## Illinois Department of Transportation

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Design and production of Rt. 20 Citizen's Guide:  
Baumgartner Marketing Design, Inc.



Printed on  
recycled  
paper with  
soy inks

Printed by the Authority  
of the State of Illinois  
August, 1993, 5M

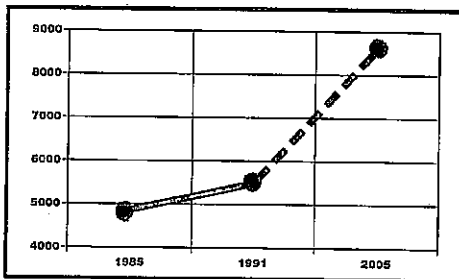
## A QUESTION OF NEED

With its unique natural setting, its history and culture, northwest Illinois has become a tourist destination as well as a vacation retreat and a locale for second home development. To accommodate the increased traffic volume and to limit highway accidents, the state has widened and resurfaced the two-lane stretch of Rt. 20 from Freeport to Galena, improved bridges and added passing lanes in key areas over the past several decades.

Even so, a 1990 study conducted by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to assess the long-term need for upgrading the highway and the short-term need for improvements, showed that the highway has consistently had a high accident history. From 1979 to 1984, a total of 1,233 accidents occurred on Rt. 20 from East Dubuque to Bolton Road west of Freeport.

The total number of accidents increased to 1,380 over the next five years, from 1985 to 1990. Further analysis showed that almost 50 percent of the roadway is made up of high-accident sections due to inadequate shoulder widths, limited visual clearance along roadsides and restricted viewing distances for passing and for negotiating intersections.

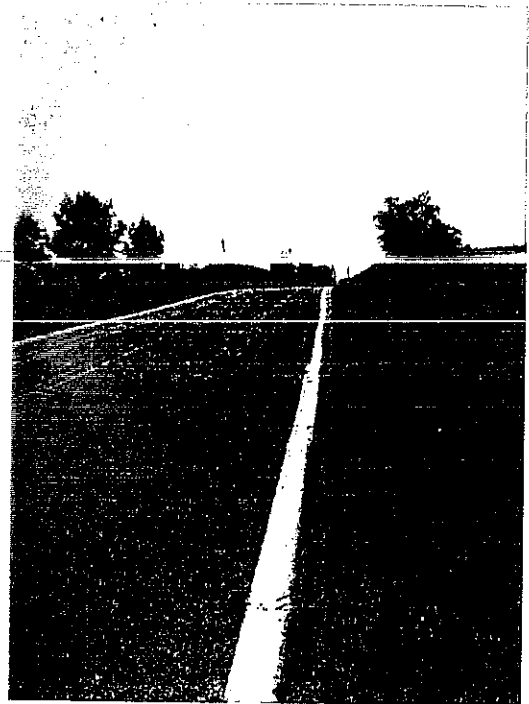
The study also projected an increasing traffic volume along with a decline in physical roadway service and bearing capacity. This and other IDOT



Source IDOT

studies have shown the average daily traffic (ADT) volume to be 4,800 in 1985, 5,500 in 1991 and 8,600 projected in 2005 - and higher for certain segments of Rt. 20. Studies also show that a significant number of trucks use the highway.

Researchers concluded that future development in the region depends on good east-west commercial access patterns. The cross country trucking industry now primarily uses I-80 for transport between Iowa and Chicago. In addition, IDOT planners believe that a much greater potential for reaching outlying agricultural markets and for expanding recreational activities within the region would exist with a four-lane highway in northwest Illinois.



➤ Crumbling roadway, limited views for passing and no shoulders have contributed to increasing traffic accidents on Rt. 20.

*But exactly where would a new highway corridor be developed?*

## LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

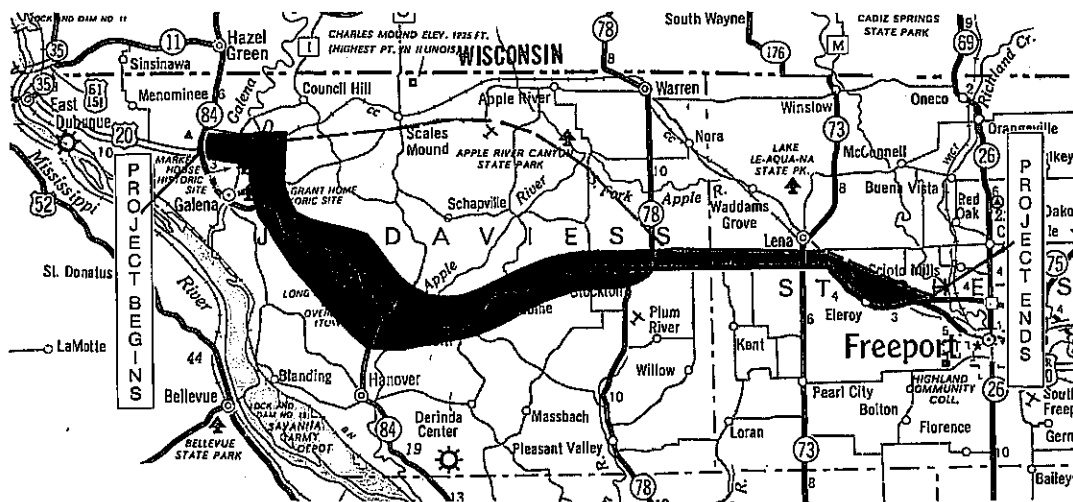
As early as the late 1960s IDOT conducted a study on a potential corridor for a new U.S. Rt. 20. It looked to select a highway corridor that would have minimal cost, service local communities and be compatible with the future growth and development of the region. Thus, the study recommended that a highway corridor be developed in the northern part of Jo Daviess and Stephenson Counties.

From the intersection of Rt. 84 and U.S. Rt. 20 northwest of Galena, the corridor would have swung northeast toward Scales Mound, then easterly to just below the village of Apple River. Then the corridor took a southeasterly trend below Apple River Canyon State Park toward Stockton and east along existing Rt. 20 into Stephenson County just south of Lena.

As time passed, however, the recommendation was abandoned. Development did not progress along the proposed northern corridor, and that alignment would have impacted sensitive natural areas. Further, the corridor did not pass close enough to populated areas to provide service for local communities. And very importantly, in 1969 the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was passed.

The law required that all human and natural environmental impacts of any federal action be assessed prior to the action being taken. Because of NEPA an environmental impact statement had to be prepared for the proposed U.S. Rt. 20 project. Suddenly the 1969 state study on Rt. 20 was inadequate and the cost to comply with NEPA was uncertain.

### U.S. Route 20 Project Area Map



> Illinois Department of Transportation has abandoned the old northern corridor proposal for a new U.S. Rt. 20 (dotted line) in favor of a study area close to the existing highway corridor (shaded area).

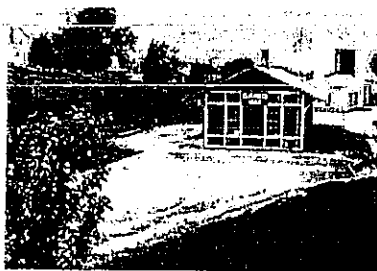
IDOT researchers today believe that to best serve the agricultural community and existing population centers, a new four-lane corridor should be located close to the existing roadway except near the Tapley Woods Conservation Area. To prevent disruption of this unique natural system, highway planners may need to avoid the existing highway corridor from just west of the entrance to Galena Territory near Galena to west of Woodbine.

Of significance beyond the region, a new highway, close to 50 miles in length from Galena to Freeport, would complete a major portion of the missing link in the four-lane highway system extending from Chicago through Iowa and into Nebraska. The existing four-lane roadway from Galena to East Dubuque would be modified slightly to meet specifications of the new connecting highway.

But even with State of Illinois research showing a need for a new highway based on traffic volume, accidents, regional growth and development and system continuity, local interest in a full-scale environmental impact and location design study was necessary to make it become a reality.



> Illinois Department of Transportation will take care in designing a new Rt. 20 highway corridor to avoid sensitive natural areas.



> To best serve the agricultural community and population centers, a new four-lane highway should be located close to the existing Rt. 20 corridor.

## LOCAL IMPETUS

Local economic development, recreation and tourism interests in particular felt that their future depended on a new highway. Throughout the latter 1980s, civic and business leaders in both Jo Daviess and Stephenson Counties lobbied federal funding sources for the dollars to complete an environmental impact statement and a location design study.

Such an investigation would identify the best alignment for a new, four-lane highway based on extensive requirements for socio-economic and environmental impact analyses as well as engineering design considerations. Proponents found that a new law authorizing transportation funds for the next six years was on the horizon in Congress.





When the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 was passed, environmental impact and location design studies for a new U.S. Rt. 20 corridor were included. In a project that could cost upwards of \$300 million to design and build over a period of 10 to 15 years, approximately 80 percent of the dollars would come from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and 20 percent from the state.

*How will highway planners carry out the environmental impact and location design studies?*

*> Economic development, recreation and tourism interests have felt that their futures depended on a new highway.*

## ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATE ALIGNMENTS

Much of the first three and one-half years of the project will be devoted to:

- gathering data on local conditions
- developing and analyzing alternate alignments based on sound engineering practices
- assessing the engineering design, socio-economic and environmental impacts of the alignments and
- obtaining public input on all of these factors.

These studies will cost several million dollars and will bring the effect of various highway location proposals into sharp view.

IDOT and its consultants will conduct the studies and provide a forum for citizen involvement. These studies are the first part of a three-phase process IDOT uses to carry out highway development.

## PHASE I - PLANNING

The location design study and environmental impact statement are prepared and a public involvement plan is carried out.

### *What kinds of impacts must IDOT and the public examine?*

Socio-economic issues and impacts relating to business and industry, neighborhood relocation, economic development, agriculture, tourism, community services and tax base reductions due to land acquisition by the state.

Environmental issues and impacts relating to air quality, surface and groundwater quality, land resources, wildlife, wetlands, native plant communities, threatened and endangered species, hazardous waste containment and noise. Cultural resources issues and impacts relating to archaeology and historical resources.

The location and type of highway are determined based on its purpose, the needs it will fulfill and its impacts and costs.

A recommendation is made by IDOT taking public comment into account to the FHWA on whether and where the highway should be built and how it should be designed.



## PHASE II DEVELOPMENT OF CONTRACT PLANS AND LAND ACQUISITION

### *Development of Contract Plans*

The state hires an engineering consultant to develop the detailed plans and specifications for how the highway will be built.

Detailed maps and drawings include all associated construction such as bridges and other drainage structures, intersections, overpasses, on and off-ramps, as well as cross-sections of the road bed itself, the relocation of utilities and many more details.

### *Land Acquisition*

The state acquires the right of way or land in the highway corridor in order to begin construction. Under the right of eminent domain, the State of Illinois may take private land for highway construction but must compensate the owner at fair market value.

At approximately 300 feet wide and 50 miles long, some 2,000 acres could be needed to complete construction of a four-lane highway such as Rt. 20.

### PHASE III - CONSTRUCTION

A large highway construction project like Rt. 20 normally would be completed over several years.

The highway would be built in useable sections and would allow continuing access for community residents during construction.

## *Should the new highway be a freeway or an expressway?*

### **FREEWAY OR EXPRESSWAY?**

IDOT promotes public safety as a primary goal of highway construction. From a safety standpoint and other areas of consideration, a new four-lane highway may need to be a freeway. A freeway would have interchanges for traffic to enter and exit the highway via ramps. Overpasses and underpasses would be used to route intersecting roadways.

This type of highway avoids conflicting movements that arise when traffic travelling in different directions meet. Expressways are built with intersections where two roads cross and traffic signals or stop signs are used to control access. However, they too may use interchanges to handle the traffic of intersecting state highways.

IDOT intends that a roadway in northwestern Illinois would be designed also with the utmost attention to preservation of the scenic wonder of the land. Due to its controlled access features, a freeway is most conducive to controlling development along the highway corridor.

And taking into account the recreational pursuits of the region, the public may even want to consider whether a bikeway could be incorporated into the highway corridor. To address these issues regarding the four-lane highway, planners are beginning dialogue with the public.



*> With its interchanges and overpasses, a freeway provides greater safety than an expressway and helps to promote commercial development near community centers, not along the roadway.*



## *Getting Involved*

### THE PUBLIC AND IDOT

In Phase I an extensive public involvement process will be carried out to foster comment by the public as well as various local interest groups on all potential impacts of a highway.

IDOT and its consultants have developed a structure that provides a forum for public debate and for study of engineering design, environmental and socio-economic impacts. It is designed to promote dialogue between and among individuals, transportation planners, local government officials and interest groups. It is set in a climate of openness and media access.



Many different issues will be brought to the table for discussion. And yet a new highway can become a vehicle for forging common goals. It will spotlight issues for compromise and it can crystallize new ways of looking at how segments of rural and urban life in Jo Daviess and Stephenson Counties fit together.

The engineering design, socio-economic and environmental impact assessment process can afford all those who live and work in the region a chance to devise a shared vision for use and preservation of its precious natural resources. The dialogue begun with the Rt. 20 study project may become a springboard for use by local residents to create an enlarged future.

### PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS & HEARINGS

An initial public meeting was held in June 1993 to inform the general public about the study process and invite their involvement. It also provided a setting for the development of work groups and an advisory council.



*> Local residents will determine impacts of building a new highway by working together.*

Another public meeting scheduled for fall 1993 and two additional meetings over the next two years will promote public involvement and update local residents on engineering design, socio-economic and environmental impact study progress.

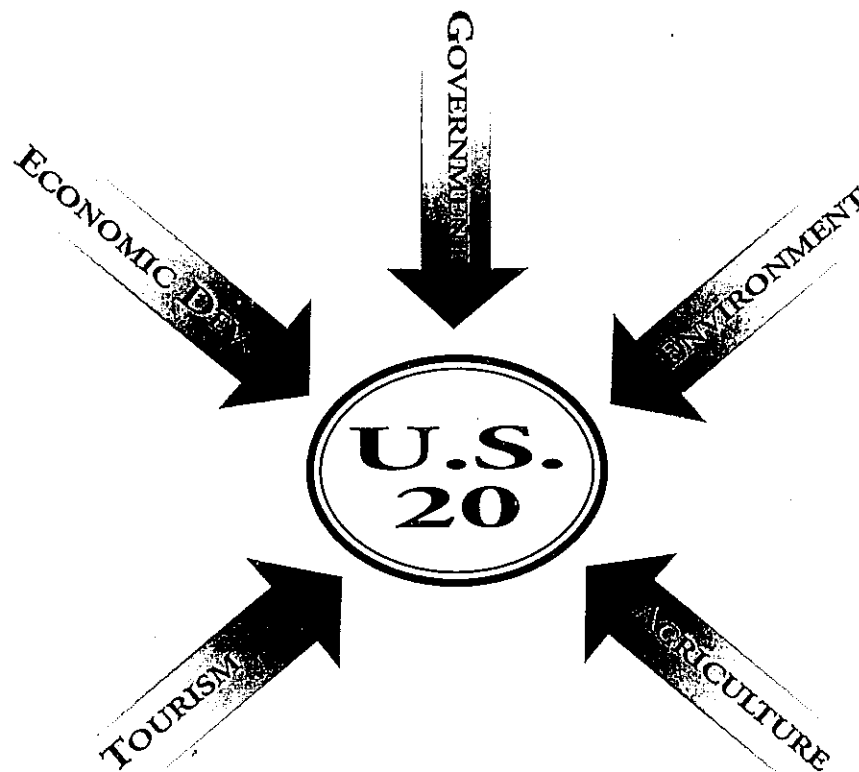
An open house format is used for public information meetings. It provides an informal setting in which individuals may study highway design proposals and environmental impact findings to date and then address their comments to IDOT staff and its consultants for review.

## LOCAL WORK GROUPS

The quality of dialogue will depend on how many local citizens and interest groups get involved and the depth of their participation in forging a sense of the highway's impact on the region. Every idea must be woven into the fabric of tomorrow. Building consensus depends on full participation.

To further promote public involvement, IDOT has set out a kind of road map for citizens to become a part of the planning process:

Five work groups made up of local residents will represent the following areas of interest:



The work groups will meet periodically to discuss the findings of engineering, technical, biological, socio-economic, demographic and environmental impact studies being carried out by IDOT's consultants. Two surveys of local residents' attitudes regarding highway construction will be carried out and reported to the work groups and the general public as well.

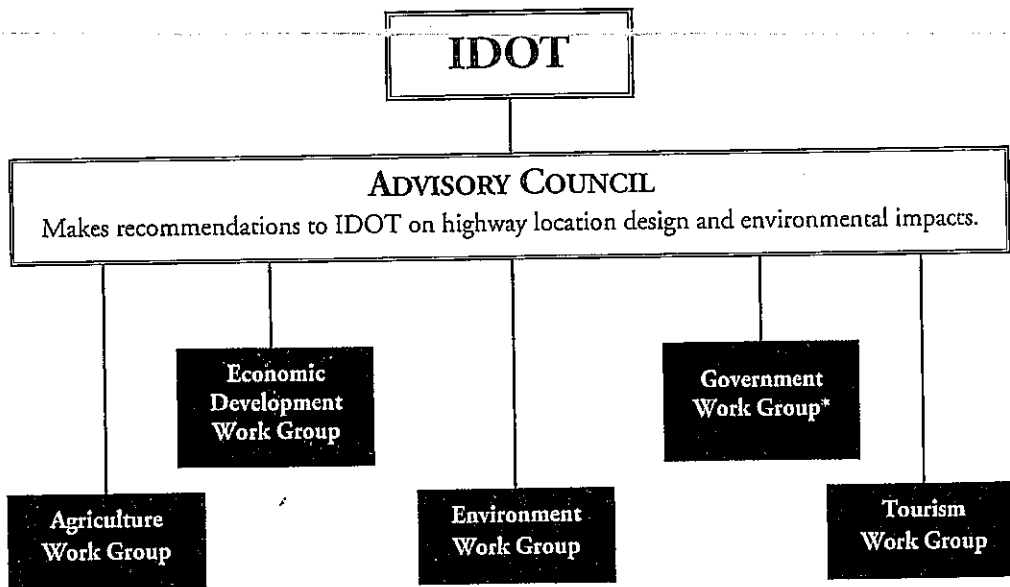
Essentially, each work group will focus on the impacts of a new four-lane highway on its own segment of life

## AN ADVISORY COUNCIL

Each work group will select its chair and another representative to serve on an advisory council. These individuals will work together to develop a consensus regarding highway impacts. Local residents can make comments to the advisory council at its meetings. The group ultimately will prepare a report to IDOT on its recommendations regarding highway construction.

Then IDOT will make its final recommendation to FHWA on how to proceed with highway construction based on this assessment of socio-economic and environmental impacts and the engineering location design study. A no action alternative must be considered by the advisory council as well.

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM FOR RT. 20 WORK GROUP AND ADVISORY COUNCIL STRUCTURE



Each work group identifies impacts in its own area of interest and selects a chair and one other representative who become members of the Advisory Council.

*\*The government work group may be subdivided into task forces so that each local community, county and other government units can work independently.*

## PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing will be scheduled at the end of the study period, probably in early 1996. At the hearing, again using an open house format, IDOT will inform the public of its recommendations on highway construction. Advisory council recommendations will become a part of the public record.

The public will have a chance to study all documents and reports on impacts and to comment. The public comment period will begin 30 days prior to the public hearing and end 15 days after.

## BEING "IN THE KNOW"

Throughout the study process IDOT is providing a toll-free telephone number, 1-800-837-RT20, for citizens to request information and speak to public involvement coordinators and technical study managers. A periodic newsletter regarding work group and advisory council progress as well as alignment study findings will be published.

Sites in both counties will be established in public buildings, civic centers and libraries for information distribution as well as receipt of written questions and comments from the public. From time to time an IDOT mobile office will be in the region to allow the public to interact with IDOT and consultant staff and to view displays.

Press releases will be issued to the media regarding advisory council meetings, public meetings and hearings. The press is a partner in a public involvement program. All project staff will strive to keep the media well informed. Highway planners rely on good media coverage to keep the general public informed of project progress.

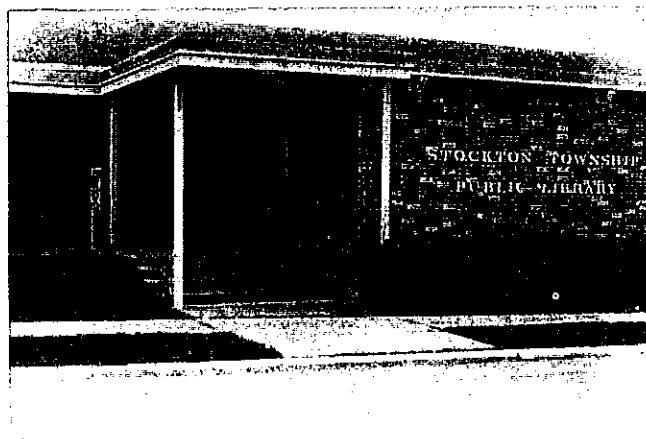


> Sites throughout the study area will be established in public buildings, civic centers and libraries where the public can pick up printed information.

**CALL TOLL-FREE  
1-800-837-RT20**

> Rt. 20 Information  
Distribution Centers:

- Galena Public Library
- Freeport Public Library
- Stockton Public Library



## CORRIDOR THEME

A regional planning program, whether undertaken because of a proposed highway, a need for jobs locally or for recreation and/or preservation needs, can have implications beyond just any single purpose. A large, regional land use planning process touches all aspects of life and livelihood in an area. Carried out properly, it characterizes and accommodates all regional needs. It can fashion a future with a purpose.



To further encourage all the varied interests that will be part of the highway planning project to focus on its regionwide economic, social and environmental implications, IDOT and its consultants have developed a theme for the corridor. It is one that draws on the unique and beautiful natural surroundings in Stephenson and Jo Daviess Counties.

From the land and its physical qualities grow the lifestyles and livelihoods of the people dwelling there. From it also grows a sense that a community's or region's destiny lies in nurturing the land and protecting its offerings. Ancient peoples who lived very close to the land were no more bound to its care than we are today. As always, tomorrow depends on wise choices today.

The theme Glacier Shadow Pass captures the past, how the land came to be, and what it may mean for the future of local residents in all of its prismatic facets — agricultural, economic, environmental, recreational and in the relationships that knit these pieces of the human fabric together. It is a departure point for setting future agendas that link us to the past.

With the numerous studies and care that will be taken to perform a complete investigation, it will be a number of years before a four-lane freeway could be completely finished in northwest Illinois. During the period of planning and assessment the State of Illinois will continue to make improvements to Rt. 20 to make it as safe as possible for travelers.

In the meantime the theme, Glacier Shadow Pass, will help individuals to refocus again and again on the value of the land and its people. It will outlast the construction of a highway and provide an impetus for shared visions, goals and decision-making for years to come.

